August 6, 2008

Adult Education Consortium—Directors'

USOE, 250 E 500 S, Salt Lake City, UT

Room 222

Attending: Anita Craven, Becky Peters, Brian Olmstead, Dennis Crane, James Andersen, Jeff Galli, Katie Jensen, Kellie Tyrrell, Loma Prince, Marty Kelly, Murray Meszaros, Sandra Grant, Shauna South, Wayne Mifflin, Toni Myers, Al Newton

Excused: Kate Diggins

Welcome: Marty Kelly welcomed all attending.

Marty: The Adult Education and the Corrections Education board rules have been updated. Both rules have passed through the third reading. They are expected to go into effect October 8, 2008.

DWS is talking about setting up a new assessment pathway starting with the Central Region. It is proposed that they (DWS) will test all clients in-house with the TABE assessments before they send anyone to any program. Their idea is to target those individuals requiring additional educational services before they access other services. The questions for us are; will we accept the test scores from DWS, how long of a window will we accept the tests scores, and what about BEST and CASAS assessments.

The TABE Test administered by DWS is the online version. The question becomes do we accept this test and if so under what criteria.

Feedback?

Dennis: We have had quite a bit of input with Southeastern DWS, but I monitor all the testing. DWS asked for this. The tests are online. I issue a test ticket from my office, the students take it in the DWS office, the results come to me in my office since I monitor the system, and I attach the scores to an email and send it to DWS. There is an official report that can be printed and put in the student's file for the auditors.

Katie: Is everyone going to like this, that when a student arrives at their program they have been pre-tested? **Wayne:** If it has been done properly, I don't see that there is a problem.

Sandi: I have heard that DWS is contracting with other agencies, not adult education, to do the testing. Assessment standards have not been followed. Students end up being double tested.

Shauna: If assessment protocol is being followed by DWS staff, not only should the 35 day window be appropriate but I think if they are testing appropriately and are finding that the client is functioning below a 9th grade level, those referrals should be made to adult education. I don't think that is happening.

Dennis: We use our ATC as a site for our adult education. We have turned their developmental classes into our adult education. The students are co-enrolled in the ATC and adult education.

Katie: If the DWS testing is going to happen, I wouldn't say that they should have 35 days to get the testing to an adult education program, I would say 25 days to allow us the time to get the scores entered into UTopia.

Marty: The project is starting in the Central Region, but they are looking to take it statewide.

Dennis: Don't let them take it statewide, I don't want it changed in my area. We do the testing for DWS using the online TABE and it is working out great. I don't charge them for the testing, but about one out of every two that test enroll in my program, so I feel it is worth it.

If they are doing the online tests the Locator is included now with the Survey. When you see the results the Locator is right there. What is nice about TABE online is the Locator automatically determines the levels of assessments for each content area.

Loma: It would have to be electronic rather than paper/pencil for us to accept the test.

Marty: So what we would accept is the electronic Locator and Survey score sheet.

Dennis: The results come up in PDF format, they can click on the email and instead of faxing the scores they can email the scores in the PDF format. The receiver can print the results.

Brian: It seems like the bigger issue is why are they not liking what was decided at the state level.

Marty: The example DWS gave me for the Central Region was Adult Education summer programs were not available when they needed clients (in particular-youth) assessed.

James: They don't want to pay the \$35 we charge to do the assessment.

Brian: If it is the money, should that be renegotiated or should we just let them do it?

James: DWS is still going to have the same problem. DWS is going to give the test, they are going to get the results and no one on their staff knows how to interpret the results to determine whether the person should be in an ABE program, a pre-literacy program, a GED prep program, or high school completion program. That is the problem. When we give the tests, we send back a recommendation that this person will not pass the GED without some basic education classes. That is the issue that I don't think the higher ups-DWS considered. Adult education offers a wide spectrum of services.

Dennis: The online TABE does translate the scores. It predicts GED scores with the Survey. The Complete Battery predicts even better. It gives a level 1-6 for every test. It will give a level for math, reading, and so on. When I retype those results into UTopia they match perfectly. It also lists the grade equivalent on the form.

Brian: If the dollar amount is what they are complaining about maybe we need to get away from the \$35 and figure that is the cost of us doing business to get students. I don't know how many students you think you are getting from them, I am actually getting a few.

James: A few, but not large numbers

Brian: You are not testing that many for them?

James: I think that the money is part but having the control of being able to test right away and not have the gap is also part.

Marty: DWS is also trying to address the gap that not all of their clients are being assessed. Alison Tanner very bluntly brought up to DWS at the Central Region meeting that DWS testing is a duplication of services. She stated, "If we are already doing this, why do you think you need to do this?" Their response was that there is a gap issue and that not all of the clients would be coming to adult education programs. I do like what Shauna said though, if the client scores below a 9.0 academic level, which would be a level 6, they should be referred to adult education regardless of what other services they want.

Katie: Isn't one of the main points of UTopia to eventually give DWS access to their clients that are in UTopia? Couldn't they get access quickly through the programs that way to check what testing has been done? I thought that was what we were working toward.

Marty: I don't have the data, but the number of referrals of DWS clients that we have is minimal.

James: To me it is the point of entry that is critical. If a student enters through the adult education system then we do the testing and enter the scores. If the point of entry is DWS and they do the testing and we have access to the scores it could be a good thing. It will not be a wonderful thing if we do not have the scores or access to the scores. The adult education students do not talk to their providers to let them know that they have applied for services and have taken tests and they end up being tested multiple times.

Marty: DWS will have access to certain screens on UTopia. When I meet with them I will make the following recommendations. One, DWS must send us the test results within 25 days for a referral so that we have 10 days to enter data. Two, anyone testing below a 9.0 grade level or an AHSC2 is automatically referred to adult education. Three, they email as a PDF the TABE test scoring result sheet and the Locator form.

Brian: Testing was my only item to bring up today. I think we are over-testing our students. I think we have some things built into UTopia that are not helping good practices to happen in terms of testing. When people have maxed out a section of the TABE—why are we retesting? We have protocol that says we have to do a full battery at certain times. However, a student is perhaps a math genius and they have maxed out on the test, why do we have to retest them.

Marty: One reason is to determine the EFL for the next year.

Brian: Are we assuming that they have digressed in their subject. As an example, I took the GRE to go to graduate school in 1996, and if I were to once again apply for graduate school they would not make me take the GRE again. They would take those results and they would believe that I still have the skills. The GED is another example. It is given in subtests and once you have passed a subtest of the GED you do not have to go back and retake that subtest to complete the GED. These instances show that you are not required to retest on a subject in which you have demonstrated mastery. I feel that we are making the student reprove mastery

every time we have to have new scores. They don't understand the fiscal year end and the need for scores for the new year. They understand they just took this test not too long ago and we are making them retake it.

Marty: A compromise is having the student take a full Survey on their anniversary of enrollment. We have to have an EFL every year. The question has always been when is the best time to do a test? Is it best to have an entry exam at the beginning of every fiscal program year, or is it best to wait and do it on your anniversary?

Loma: The students are weary of taking tests repeatedly. They know they took the tests in March – May and now we are giving the test again. We do try to explain that this is how we are funded and it does soften the attitudes from some but not all.

Marty: One thing that we do ask is that as you are testing in May or June that you not give only the post-test for the EFL area, but give the full assessment so you have a rollover test. If you do this you do not have to give a full test again in July.

Dennis: I do agree with Brian in one area. Once a student has hit level 6 they should not have to retake that particular test again. Any level 6, they should be done, unless we change forms.

Marty: As long as they have enrollee status at the end of the year.

Brian: You would always want to be testing the area identified as the area to improve. It is the other ones, the ones where mastery has been proven that shouldn't be retested.

Marty: A student must test above a 12.9 grade level otherwise they are still eligible for adult education services. But we do need to find this out because a student functioning at a 12.9 level should not be participating in adult education if a lower functioning student is in need of instruction.

It is a double edged sword issue that you have raised. The question is should everybody have a test in May/June or should we stagger it so that the test is done at another time or should we forget if they are AHSC 2 or should UTopia decided if it is AHSC 2 less than 12.9.

**Remember giving the full assessment in May or June serves as post-test and rolls over as a pre-test setting the EFL for the new year.

The full test counts as a "subject specific" test for level gains and also counts as a roll-over test with an EFL.

This cuts down on the amount of tests given to each student.

Funding Codes

The handout you have will focus our next discussion: Number of students served in each funding code. Did everybody have to reset funding codes on every student this year?

Funded funding codes will automatically be left as set in May and June and roll-over in July with the exception of number two. Number two is the code for the 16 to 19 year-old out-of-school youth with the option of returning to a K-12 program at any time.

So the funding codes, 1, 2, 4, 5, 8, and 9 would have to be reset. The other funding codes would just automatically roll over.

Jeff: Why do we have funding code 1? (Functioning at 12.9 grade level)

Wayne: It is a carryover from the time when we had funds to serve those students that were high school graduates but still lacked basic skills. It was a way for us to serve them and generate money.

James: If I were an auditor, I would want to see students in this category paying tuition.

Marty: Should we take off number 1 since it is old and we shouldn't have anyone on it?

James: Next directors' meeting, spend time on funding codes.

Marty: Do we want to make these a reset for the year? Make the 2's resettable.

The other status we are looking at not changing unless there is a change of address is "rural status." During rollover the rural status will stay the same unless you change the address of the student. How is rural status determined? It is used for a federal report. Policy says rural status is for the student who "lives in an area that has a population less than 2,500". I will ask during shop talk on Aug. 7 for the exact definitions of rural status.

Labor status has given rise to many discussions as to what we list since a student could be employed today, but three weeks from now, may not be employed. We have said whatever labor status is set at for the first of the year is the labor status that we will use on our federal report. When do you want to review the labor status? On the students' birth date, July 1 or first day you access student record in new year, or their anniversary date?

Consensus—Beginning of the school year.

Marty: The last item is the release waiver. This needs to be blanked out and reset every year. DWS says the release waiver is good for only six months on their end. The release wavier has to be done. How do you want to do it?

Toni: I would run a report and see how many students have a waiver more than six months old and have them resign.

Lunch

Jeff: I wanted to explain some things about the POM Report. When the data rolled over to the new year and programs were running their POM (Program Outcome Measure) Report they were noticing problems with the numbers. I took the two prison sites commencement programs and went student by student to find out why the numbers were not adding up. The first time through the list I took the GED graduates and looked them up on the POM Report. 90% of the names on the graduation lists were not on the POM Report. That is a

problem. They were in UTopia, but were not on that report. I took this to Toni, and we came to a conclusion that there must be some kind of a coding problem. Once they fixed the problem, I went through the list again. This time all the names came up, but it did not list what the commencement program said they earned. Again, student by student, I went through the lists. Now on the POM Report there is a date the diploma was achieved and a date the GED was passed. As I was checking off this list I noticed that on the students' missing information in UTopia, there was not a date of achievement by their goals. It appeared that the program had not marked the goal as achieved, but there were too many that were missing the dates. A program may miss one or two but not this many. What we determined is that if a person achieved a diploma or GED prior to them being an official enrollee, having enrollee status, it will not show on the POM Report. I went back and looked at all the SEOPs for the students in question to see if achievement dates were there. There were five instances where the program had not marked the goal as achieved. But in 28 instances, the goal had been marked as achieved but it was achieved prior to enrollee status, so UTopia wasn't pulling that number up. **Toni:** I ran into some records where a person finished their Adult Education in March but the graduation ceremony was not until June. The achieved date was listed as June, but since the student hadn't been active since March they were exited from the program. The program re-entered the students and put the diploma date in. The diploma did not show up as an outcome measure on the POM Report because the student wasn't enrolled in the program. So it is important to enter the graduation completion date when the student was in your program.

Marty: The ceremony may be three months later in June, but the actual date of achieving the diploma or GED is the date that we are concerned about.

Jeff: When the student is finished with coursework, that is the date that should be entered and they must be an enrollee.

Discussion conclusions: Toni will:

- continue to work on the SEOP screen ticket where programs mark GED or diplomas as achieved. If all
 credits are not entered UTopia will not let you mark a diploma as achieved.
- work on student demographic screen to add a graduation checklist to confirm all graduation requirements are completed before a student is separated.
- check on students records that are listing students "can graduate" when there are no credits, not enough credits, or credits not in the right 'buckets'.
- will work on leaving the edit button on the credits your program awarded past the new year entry period. You will not be able to add credit for the previous year, just change the amount or the graduation areas.

GED

Murray: The state of Utah has a contract with GED Testing Services. As a state we are in conflict with this contract. We are awarding credits for a successful completion of a GED. The National GED Testing Office has again more assertively asked two states that are awarding Carnegie units for the GED to cease and desist. That is Nevada and Utah. We give five units of credit. Our contract with the GED Testing Services says that we will abide by their policies, principals and so forth that they establish. We are not in compliance with the contract. GED Testing Services feels that we are devaluing the GED by offering credits toward a high school completion diploma. The implication is that the GED is not worth as much as a diploma.

We are starting to initiate research on the perceived value of the GED versus the high school diploma. Our biggest challenge is that we do not have any long term data of how high school graduates compare to GED graduates. I think the case could be argued both ways successfully that a GED is a high school diploma equivalency and the GED is not a high school equivalency.

Jeff: There is a problem with that. You can be a pretty good guesser on the Math portion of the GED. So the student can guess their way through the GED and pass. Now they have a GED/high school diploma equivalent and they have to move on, but they do not have the skills to get in to post-secondary.

Murray: There is an easy fix for this. We as the state control the level or score at which a person passes the GED. Our current research supports what you are saying. We know that if you are a 16-19 year-old and score 450 or less on the entire GED, the chance of you enrolling in post-secondary education is 40%; if you score 550 or higher the chance of you enrolling in post-secondary education is 76%.

We can raise the sub-test score of Math for the state. This is only one option and may not be the perfect fix. **Sandi:** What particularly is GED Testing Services' problem with states' issuing credits? They are a for-profit agency, they are still getting paid.

Jeff: They want to elevate the status of the GED to the same importance as a high school diploma.

Murray: The research that we just finished with DWS and post-secondary education shows that a GED credential by itself is of minimal value. In the economic workforce it is of almost no value by itself. What it does in terms of persons going on to further education going on to employment is where the GED has value in that it presents a person with a second chance to move their lives forward or in some cases to retain a job. This is based on a data match of social security numbers of 100,000 people who took the GED test.

Jeff: I have a question for those directors who have students who applied the credits given for the GED to a high school diploma. If students were not issued those credits, how many would have stayed to complete the high school diploma?

Brian: Probably the majority, to get their diploma.

Jeff: If they had an option for the GED to be the diploma, they would just take it wouldn't they?

Brian: Oh yeah.

Sandi: My real question is why does GED Testing care?

Murray: My idea is that it is image.

Loma: Why do they allow each state to count it as a diploma?

Murray: I don't have an answer. My theory is it is to have consistency across the nation.

In the norming process of the GED, they take the test and run it through thousands of individuals, your typical senior graduating class. By giving this test to high school seniors in the spring, theoretically they determine which questions people pass, which questions they don't pass, what the pass rate is and so forth. They then set the cut scores so that 40% of the typical graduating senior class would be failing the GED if they took it. By that process, they say because 40% of typical high school seniors who have been through the typical four year high school experience cannot pass this test we have the right to claim that the product that we give to you (GED test) is a high school equivalency document if someone passes the test.

GED/UTopia Data Match Process

Toni: We put a few rules together for the GED data match. We are doing the data match on all students that have a social security number or a GED access code. The student needs to have signed a release waiver at some point during the year. We will also run the data match on students that do not have a specific GED goal. The rules are:

- When we get the data from NRSpro, we will write the data to the UTopia data base
- If our achievement data does not line up with NRSpro data, NRSpro data will override UTopia data.
- If the language the test was taken in recorded in UTopia does not match NRSpro, NRSpro language will override.
- We will not track any information on people who attempted the test but did not pass.
- We will assume that all of the social security numbers in UTopia are legal.
- We will store the data pulled down from NRSpro in a special table.
- We will match on social security number and student GED access code. It is possible for us to do a data match if the student does not have a SSN.

The GED access code is recorded on the UTopia SEOP screen. When a GED is marked as achieved a new box opens that says "language", this is the language the GED test was taken in and a second box will open up that will ask for the GED access code. The student will bring in their GED paperwork that contains the access code.

The information we pull from NRSpro includes the social security number or access code of the student, the date they passed the 5th/final test, and the language taken in. We are not pulling the score. To do a data match, first we will have a table that tracks when we did data matches—whether it is quarterly, weekly, etc. We will give the data match a number with the first data match being labeled as one and so on. We will track when we pull the data down from GED/NRSpro and we will track when we pushed it to the student's record. These dates could be different. We will always know where/when we got the data and the date we pushed it out to the student table.

Students can have a goal to achieve the GED. A data match will change goals currently set. Some will have an achievement added to the record; some of the goals will end. What happens if the student does not have GED as a goal? There are three scenarios:

- The student has a GED goal and the achieved date from NRSpro is after the goal began. This is the
 logical flow. They have a goal; they attained the goal. We will add the achievement date and make the
 end date of the goal the achievement date. This will close the goal.
- 2. The student has a GED goal but the achievement date is before the begin date of the goal. This is not a valid goal since the GED was achieved before the goal was set. We will follow current UTopia practices in this instance, we will end that goal by putting an end date on that goal and a comment will be added in the goal history grid that shows the date the GED was achieved.
- 3. The student has not set a goal of getting a GED but NRSpro shows they earned a GED. In this case we will create another line in the goal history grid with no begin date or end date, but an achieved date.

This particular data match has nothing to do with diploma goals.

Dennis: Will all three scenarios award the program the outcome measures?

Toni: Not necessarily. On the POM Report the GED has to be achieved when the program was the manager of the student and the student had enrollee status and was in the program on the date of the test.

Loma: What about those students who take the GED test the first couple of weeks of a new year. They have not had time to become an enrollee for the new year, but did the prep work in May and June. Do those hours carry over?

Toni: The student does not have to be an enrollee in July or August of the new school year, but they must have been an enrollee in the previous school year. This is found in the UTopia User's Guide, Chapter 2, page 12. If the test was taken in July or August the outcome will count in the new year even though the student does not have to be an enrollee in this year.

If the NRSpro data does not match the UTopia data, the NRSpro data will override the UTopia data. However, we will store the data the program entered so we can run discrepancy reports. We are looking at what types of reports will need to be run. One idea for a report is after a data match is complete a report will

generate a list of students matched, the language the test was taken in, the date we pulled the data from NRSpro, the date we changed the student's record and the date the program entered as the GED achieved date if such a date was entered and the NRSpro achieved date. You will be able to see the discrepancies if there are any. It will have the current UTopia achieved date, what is in the student's record right now. This will allow programs to verify with the person doing the data entry that the correct date—the date of the last test—is being used as the achieved date.

We had a suggestion that the last column show the number of GED "credits" currently input in UTopia. This would allow programs to see the students that have a GED but that do not have GED "credits." A program would be able to then enter credits earned for the GED. This data match will be done monthly.

Professional Development

Marty: I handed you a spreadsheet of information from the programs. If there ESL needs, ABE/AHSC, professional development wants, or administrator needs it was noted on this sheet for future discussion.

News from the field:

Marty: Please remember that we are planning to host a Summer Institute next summer for teachers. It will be August 3, 4, and 5 in the Salt Lake valley. More information will be forthcoming.

We have had requests to put out a Weekly Chatter for teachers. Do you find the director's Weekly Chatter beneficial? (Yes) Would a teacher Weekly Chatter be beneficial? (Yes)

We would be using the teacher's email addresses from UTopia, so if you have entered a teacher with your email address, you will get a lot of emails.

We are not trying to expand anything new this year. We want to hold steady; you have had a lot of expansion in the past year. We will have direction from the auditor. We are hoping that we will be given time to do what is necessary.

ABE Standards will be coming up hopefully by March 2009. Shauna and Sandi are expanding the professional development links on the website. We are revisiting our website and making sure that it is user friendly.

Mountainland-Anita: My group is concerned with the learning curve of UTopia and general clerical errors that were made. The loss of funding is a concern. They are afraid that within two years the funding will be so low they won't be able to recover.

Sandi: To ease your fears a little, Shauna and I took the report to San Francisco and did some calculating with it. The numbers were way down, but we found the percentages were not. The percentages were pretty

much in-line with the percentages from the previous two years. The report we took was the first report and due to some research and revising the second report looks much better.

Anita: One of our units in Nebo has started teaching ESOL at Mountain Fruits. They said it has been very successful.

We have had both good and bad feedback on the 35 day rule, but overall it is good. Some also want to know when the data match on employment is going to be done.

Alpine is working together with Project Read and the two agencies have signed an agreement.

Marty: The employment data match should be done fairly soon.

Northern Region—Loma: I do not have anything to report from my area.

Central Region—James: We are still a part of the pilot project for Out-of-School Youth. They are saying that DWS does not need signed release waivers but that the school district needs the release and DWS will accept the names based on the school districts' word. This is a reversal from earlier discussions. DSW is also low on funds so they do not have the money to broker the students, so they are letting us send out to student information to interested educational partners.

Central Region is putting out to all of those students that are exempt on an adult educational program list. This includes all the educational programs in the Salt Lake County area.

CBO's—Katie: One concern that has been brought to me is the concern over the BEST scores. There isn't a lot we can do about it, but I have stated their concerns.

Marty: Lloyd Loveless in Millard and Davis Adult Education have now joined the ranks of CASAS assessors.

Western Region--Brian: In North Sanpete the Moroni turkey processing plant is closing. The price of corn has gone up and the price of raising a turkey has gotten too expensive. The idea is they will close for 3 or 4 months and then reassess. Thus the economy is tenuous which could be good for our programs.

Katie: Because of the plant closures in our area, we are seeing people that worked at these plants for years who came from other countries in adult education. They learned a little English to do their jobs, but now that the job is gone they realize they need the reading and writing skills.

Brian: My business administrator said that he does not do the roll-over amount report until October. So I cannot get the exact amount to submit a request for a state roll-over authorization.

Marty: Remember that carry over can be no more than 10% of your budget or \$50,000, whichever is less. As long as you are within those parameters you will be okay. If you can give me some idea of what you think may roll over that will help.

Because programs are going to be holding off on getting USOE the carryover figures, UTopia support will be held off as well until we find out what carry over amounts are out there.

Eastern Region--Dennis: The energy field is booming. There are lucrative jobs available in this field. This boom is impacting San Juan School District's program in the sense they are trying to encourage students to enroll in the Western Energy Technical College—an old coal mine in Carbon County. They train people to go directly into the mines. There are approximately 400 job openings in the mines this college serves. Western Energy Technical College only has 23 enrollees. The college is accepting Native Americans in the program but the Native Americans are not interested in leaving the reservation. However, there is a big coal mine on the reservation in Arizona, and the Native Americans are realizing they can go to Carbon to be trained and then go work in Arizona. The college does require a high school diploma or GED for entrance. WETC is offering concurrent enrollment with the adult education center.

I really feel that I should resign from this position. I have taken on additional duties in my district and my time will be limited. I recommend Donica Bigelow from Vernal. I have enjoyed being on this committee. I see the future and I think we need to simplify adult education. I think we can serve best by offering a GED preparation program as our main focus.

Dismiss

Marty: I will let you know the outcomes of the meeting with the auditor.

The full directors' meeting will be October 7. Consortium meeting will be on the 8th, with the directors meeting from 9-2 and the full consortium from 2-4. Both of these meetings will be held here at USOE.